

# RETRO FUSION



## THE FRENCH RESISTANCE

WE RECOGNISE THE CONTRIBUTION THE FRENCH HAVE MADE TO GAMING

## THE OCEAN STORY PART 2

THE 2ND PART OF THE OCEAN STORY BY MARK JONES

IN THIS ISSUE OF RETRO FUSION

### ZZAP

ROGER KEAN TALKS TO FUSION ABOUT HIS FAVOURITE ISSUE OF ZZAP 64

### HOMEBREW

THE VERY BEST OF THE LATEST HOMEBREW

### RETRO SWEETS

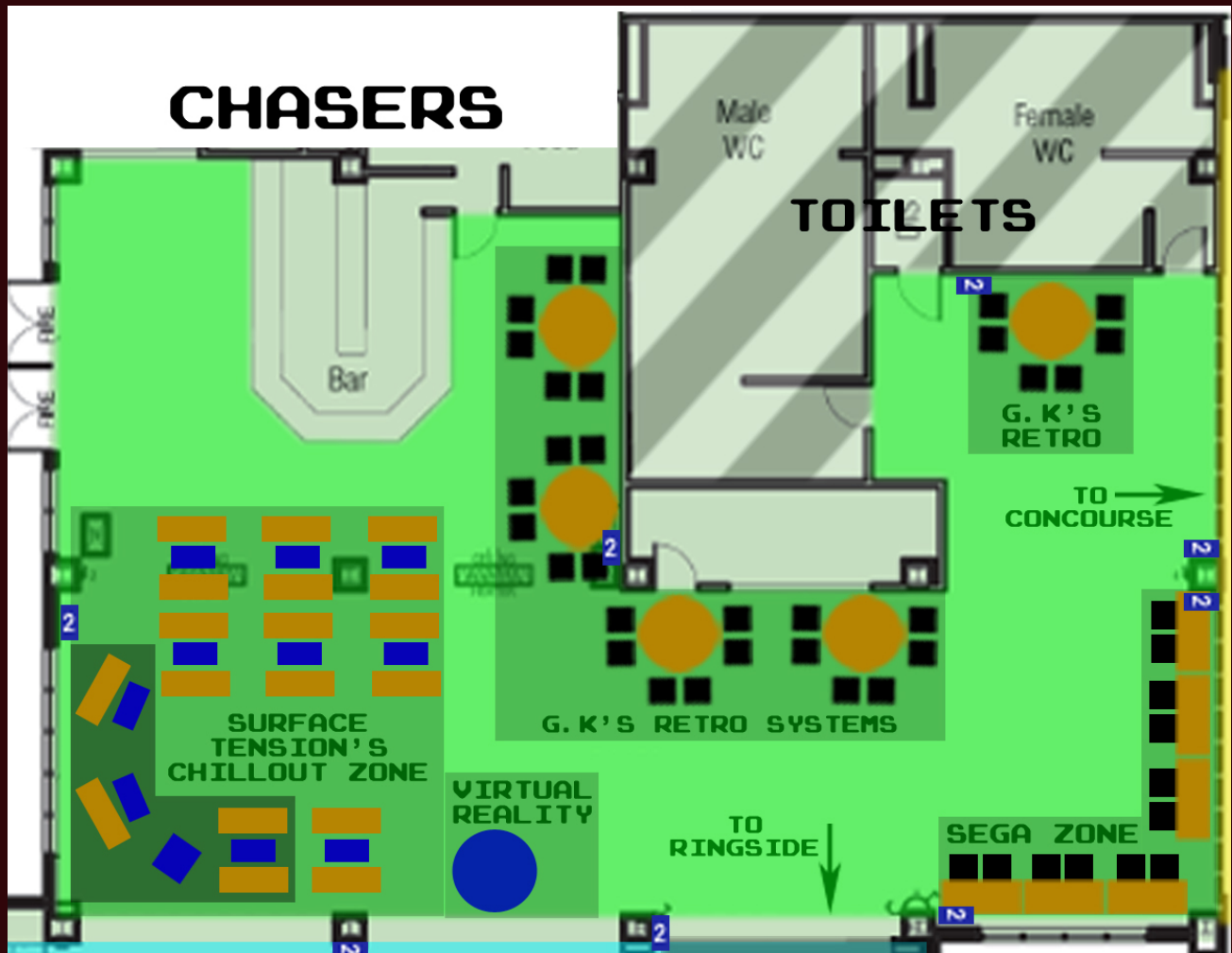
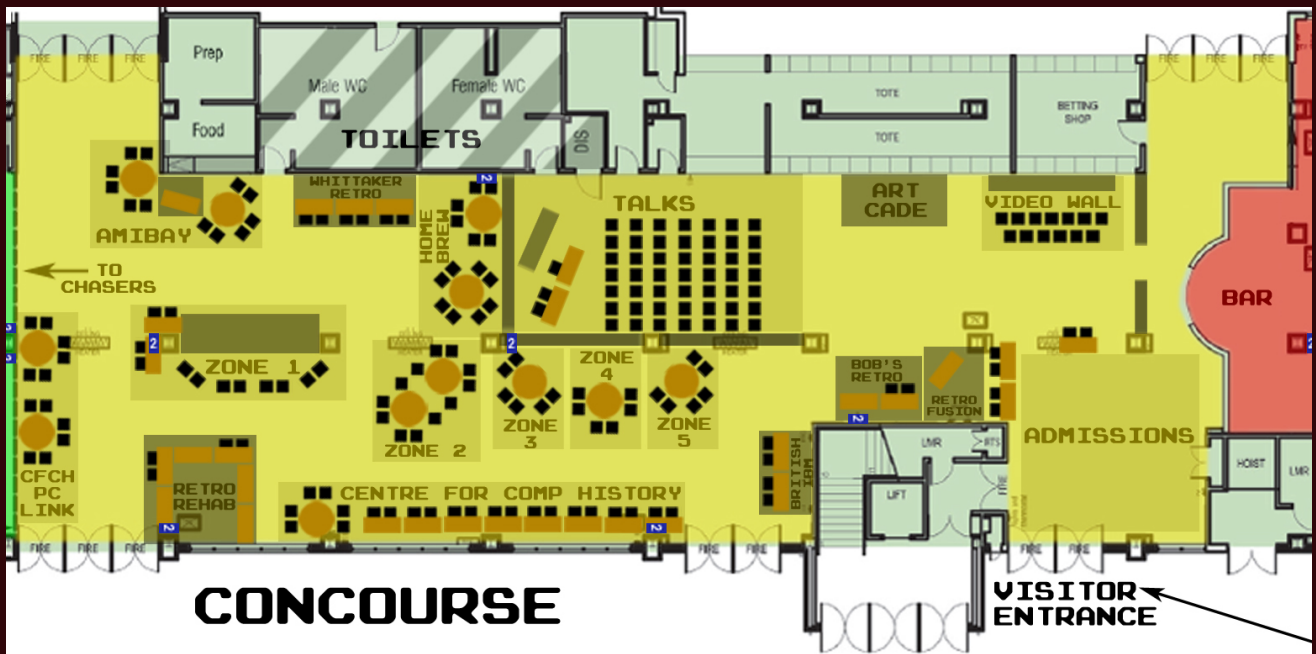
ALEX TROWERS TAKES HIS SWEETNESS TO THE NET



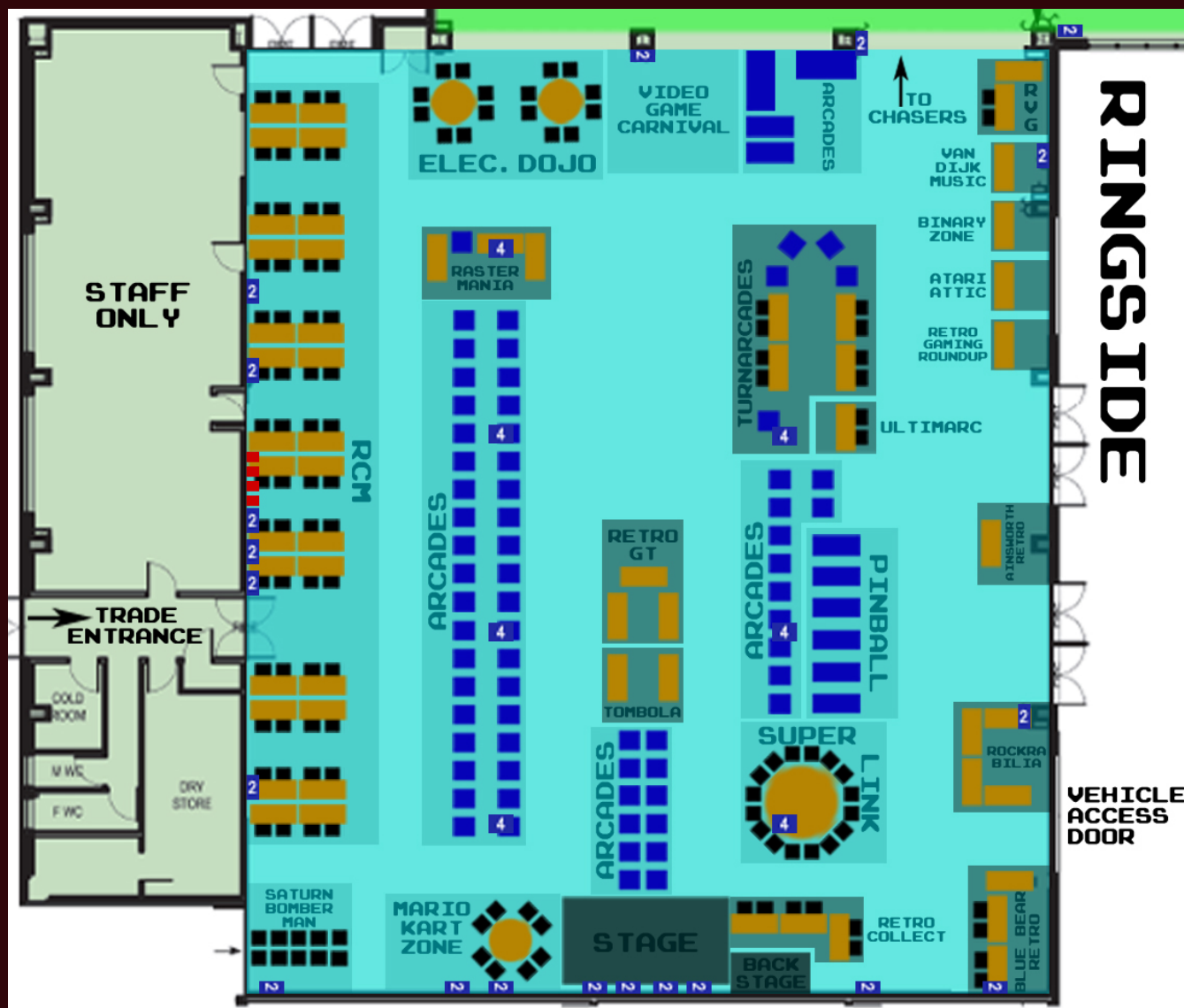
ISSUE FOUR | REVIVAL 2013

# REVIVAL

REMEMBER... RELIVE... REVIVE...







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# RETRO FUSION EDITORIAL

Welcome to issue four of Retro Fusion which as you may well notice is a rather special Revival Retro Events 2013 mini-issue only available to those who attended the event at Dunstall Park, Wolverhampton over the weekend of the 18th and 19th May.

If you were there then I hope you enjoyed it - watch out for announcements very soon for next years date!

The first two pages of this magazine show the floor plan of Revival and as you can see it's a pretty big area we are covering with all sorts of retro goodies.

Suffice to days, by the time you are reading this, we are probably planning the next event already!

In this issue we have part two of Mark Jones' Ocean article, a look at French gaming pretty much asking what the French has ever done for us? Some good games actually.

The rmagazine again will have an online version that can be found at the Retro Fusion site ([www.retrofusion.me.uk](http://www.retrofusion.me.uk)) and the Revival site ([www.revivalretroevents.com](http://www.revivalretroevents.com)) straight after the event.

We hope you enjoy this token magazine and have a great time at the Revival event - don't forget to come and say hello and please do give us some feedback on the event and the magazine.

Chris Wilkins, Editor



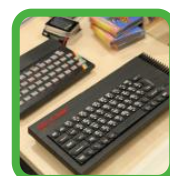
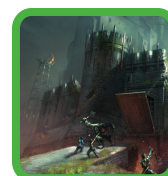
“*fu·sion* (fyū'zhən) n.  
1. The merging of different elements into a union: the fusion of copper and zinc to form brass; the difficult fusion of conflicting political factions.  
2. A union resulting from fusing: A fusion of religion and politics emerged.  
3. Physics. A nuclear reaction in which nuclei combine to form more massive nuclei with the simultaneous release of energy.”

Fusion

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Gaming



## Find Us on the Web

Take a look at our website ([www.retrofusion.me.uk](http://www.retrofusion.me.uk)) and popular forum. We are proud to announce that ALL Newsfield magazines will be available on the site as Flip-Books - Crash, ZZap 64 and Amtix to name but a few.



# ISSUE #4

## REVIVAL '13

### CREDITS &

**Website** | [www.retrofusion.me.uk](http://www.retrofusion.me.uk)

**Editor** | Chris Wilkins

**Design Editor** | Chris Wilkins

**Sub-Editor** | Alex Ross-Shaw

#### Editorial Contributors

Chris Wilkins, Alex Ross-Shaw, Mark Jones, Spencer Marshman, Roger Kean

#### Graphical Design

Chris Wilkins

#### Publisher

Fusion Publishing

Dencer Drive

Kenilworth

CV8 2QR

Tel: 07540 653 208



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Blakes 7



“ret-ro (rĕt-rō) adj.

Retro, short for retrospective, is a modern term used to describe things from a bygone era. It is often used in a positive sense, referring to quirky or attractive products that are no longer available. For example, “Retro fashion” or “Retro Chic” may consist of outdated styles, such as tie-dyed shirts from the 1970s, or poodle skirts from the 1950s. A love of retro objects (things from the past) is called retrophilia. (Source: Wikipedia)

## Advertisers

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## Submissions

If you would like to submit an article to the magazine then please contact Chris [chris@retrofusion.org.uk](mailto:chris@retrofusion.org.uk)

# news

# JOSS

## Revival

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# REVIVAL

DUNSTALL PARK, WOLVERHAMPTON 18/19TH MAY 2013  
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Welcome to Revival - you may be very well be at the event right now whilst reading this so we hope you enjoy the rows of arcade machines, the table upon table of retro systems and pinball corner.

Look around and you make see Archer Maclean or Sandy White or Mike Montgomery or one of the many Ocean crew that are attending and in some cases being involved in talks.

Stay for the evening and you are invited to a music chiptune special music show.

If the event has come and gone, then there will always be next year as Revival promises to be an annual extravagaza of retro goodness - check out the Revival site for the photos and videos of this year's event - [www.revivalretroevents.com](http://www.revivalretroevents.com) and we hope to see you again very soon. Also do not forget to upload your pictures and videos to the site.

## Meet Ninty's latest Heroine

Awight our Pauline!

An enterprising father has taken on female underrepresentation in gaming by hacking the NES port of the arcade classic Donkey Kong and switching the roles of the two main characters.

Jumpman, who was later renamed and became a minor gaming star in his own right, is now the object of Kong's

sweet desires, while Pauline is now tasked with jumping over barrels and climbing ladders to rescue her sweetheart.

The role reversal came about when said father's three year-old daughter made clear her disappointment at having to play a dude rescuing a chick (although she may have expressed it differently). Her father, who let's face it is obviously the best dad in the world, decided to create his own version of Donkey Kong to let his daughter live out her fantasies of dressing like a princess and rescuing a squat, pot-bellied Italian plumber from the hands of a simian cooper.

Even better, he's now shared his creation with the world, so you too can join in the fun - <http://www.engadget.com/2013/03/11/donkey-kong-hack-gives-pauline-the-central-role-32-years-later/>





# Ultima comeback on Kick!

## The return of a classic series

Legendary RPG series Ultima is set to make a return after series founder, Richard Garriott successfully sought a million dollars via crowd-sourcing funding website, Kickstarter.

Titled Shroud of the Avatar, the game is being billed as 'harkening' back to Garriott's early work, primarily by bashing modern RPGs as level grinders that don't make you care about the game world or your characters within it, which perhaps ignores the fury generated by Mass Effect when the ending of the trilogy didn't match the expectations players had for their characters.

The Kickstarter quickly passed the million dollar threshold, although Garriott has come under some criticism from gaming news site Rock Paper Shotgun for seeking Kickstarter funding given that he spent millions of dollars of his own money to send himself into space.

Nonetheless, fans of the series will undoubtedly be excited at the return of the classic series, though it remains to be seen whether it can live up to its legacy and compete with modern-day classics such as Skyrim.

Shroud of the Avatar is due for release in October 2014 as a downloadable title available on PC, Mac and Linux.



# Sega Pluto

## Another planet is found in our galaxy - Sega Pluto!

The interwebs got its knickers in a twist recently when not one, but two prototype Sega consoles, codenamed Project Pluto, suddenly came to light.

The first was revealed on the ASSEMBler forums by a poster called Super Magnetic (after the Dreamcast game), who said it was one of only two ever made. The poster uploaded several pictures of the machine, which was essentially a Sega Saturn with a built-in modem.

Amazingly, the news about the machine prompted someone else to come forward with the only other prototype in existence.

The second Pluto was bought for a dollar at a garage sale years ago, but the owner never realised what it was in his possession until he saw the news about the other Pluto.

The project was eventually scrapped and the Netlink modem was released as a separate peripheral. However, with internet gaming in such infancy it was only ever compatible with a handful of games. Sega had another shot at console gaming with the Dreamcast but again fell short.

The Pluto machines haven't been valued but if auctioned they'd certainly go for more than the dollar one cost at a garage sale.

Just spare a thought for the poor sap who sold it in the first place.



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## Welcome to the Gaming Section



We here at Retro Fusion are mad about our computer and video games. As an integral part of our upbringing, games are the quintessential symbol of treasured days gone by, providing hours upon hours of memorable entertainment.

So here is the section where we pay tribute to the greatest hobby on earth that gave so much unbridled joy when we all should have been busy at work, school or generally socialising with the outside world. But despite the failed responsibilities, we wouldn't have it any other way.

## Retro Ports for Your Retro Kit

[www.retrousb.com](http://www.retrousb.com)

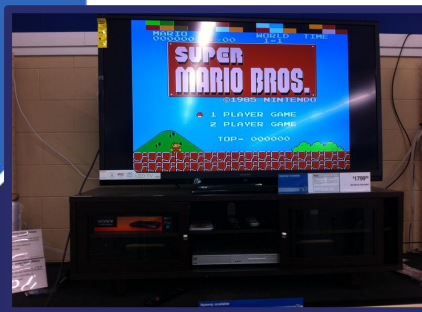
As technology improves, retro video game collectors are faced with the ever increasing challenge of storing a plethora of old TV's in order to encapsulate an authentic gaming experience. Thankfully the guys at

Retro Zone may have a solution to this age old problem. The project known currently as the 'Scoreboard' is a separate device which sits within the NES and is designed with an HDMI port to support a true 480p digital output. Early development screenshots have already shown the system plugged into a 40" HDTV displaying an incredibly high picture quality with no blurs or smudges.

In addition to the superior graphical support, the device is also equipped with a mini-USB port that when connected to an internet enabled PC will allow the NES to submit high scores to Nintendoage.com's online leader board.

At this present time the device is only set to be compatible with the infamous Nintendo model NES-101 known to most as 'The Toploader'. The Toploader of course is currently the most desirable original NES system on account of its lack of a lockout chip allowing the system to play imported games.

The device pre-installed in a top loader will be available to order at [www.retrousb.com](http://www.retrousb.com) and is now available..





# THE FRENCH RESISTANCE

## ALEX ROSS-SHAW EXPLORES THE BEST OF THE GAMES THAT THE FRENCH HAVE SENT OVER TO THE UK ON THE FERRY FROM CALAIS

When listing games for our Top Ten Sci-Fi Games to Play Before You Die! feature in Retro Fusion Issue 3 (available online in paper and electronic format today!), one thing that struck us here at Retro Fusion towers, if by towers you mean a two-bedroom mid-terrace, was the number of French games we had to choose from.

Another World, Flashback and Captain Blood were all on the shortlist for the feature.

Chatting about it afterwards, we listed some more famous French games like Alone in the Dark and Little Big Adventure. Turns out there is quite a story to tell with French video gaming, having not just gifted the world some of the greatest video games ever made but helping shape gaming and the wider industry as we know it today.

To tell this story we must first travel back in the mists of time, to the days when Eric Cantona's footballing assaults were still restricted to mainland Europe and Gerard Depardieu was still French.

### Huit-A-Bits

It is the 8-bit era, and two of France's future video game giants, Ubisoft and Infogrames are developing and publishing games for the trio of 8-bit systems, the ZX Spectrum, Commodore 64 and the Amstrad CPC.

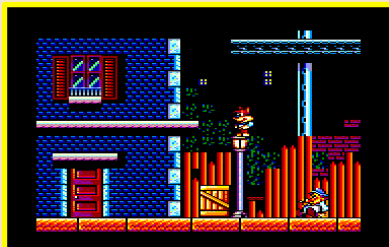
Their foray into the 8-bit markets along with smaller developers can in hindsight said to be solid, if a little unremarkable, compared to what would follow.

Nonetheless, Zombi, Ubisoft's first release remains one of their most popular 8-bit titles, North & South is a classic American Civil War strategy sim developed by Infogrames while highlights from smaller developers include Titus the Fox: To Marrakech and Back on the Amstrad CPC by Titus Software and Bumpy on the ZX Spectrum by Loricels.

### Seize the moment

However, the arrival of the Amiga and Atari ST spurred French software houses to up their game

### Titus The Fox - Titus



Released in 1992, this Bart vs. The Space Mutants-alike platformer pushed the aging Amstrad CPC to its limits. Consequently it suffers from some speed issues but it doesn't detract from the achievement of seeing a game like this run on the CPC. An important 'late-era' CPC title.



significantly in the late 1980s, although few could have predicted the impact they would have on the world of gaming over the next few years.

Various French companies were making their mark, with Exxos releasing the superb Captain Blood (via Infogrames as publisher) a dark sci-fi adventure that saw you traverse the galaxy hunting down clones of yourself. It was firmly immortalised in video gaming history after featuring in Retro Fusion Issue 3 (Not really, Ed).

Delphine Software arrived in the 16-bit era and quickly became masters of the 'point-and-click' genre, releasing a string of quality adventure games including Cruise for a Corpse, Future Wars and the fantastic James Bond-inspired Operation Stealth.

However, it was a different title that really secured Delphine's place in gaming history. Titled Out of this World in the US market, over time it has become universally known by its European name, Another World, a sci-fi adventure game that became hugely influential for its cinematic style and realistic animations and controls.

Not one to be left behind, Infogrames followed with a game of arguably even greater importance in the history of gaming.

While Another World represented the peak, then, of platform gaming, Alone in the Dark, released in 1992, was a classic haunted house tale that showed the world very clearly that the future of gaming was 3D and almost single-handedly gave birth to the now insanely popular survival horror genre.

Although the future was clearly 3D, Delphine returned in 1993 with another 2D platformer, Flashback, which further developed the realistic cinematic style of Another World and made it more detailed and fluid. It quickly became an iconic title promoted through Microsoft's revolutionary new OS, Windows 95 (Ha! Ed) and more importantly it was also featured in our Top Ten Sci-Fi Games feature in RF 3.

## Captain Blood - Exxos



Captain Blood sees you play a writer sucked into your own game before an accident in hyperspace creates 30 clones, each containing a portion of your vital fluids that you must recover. It's actually one of the few games designed on an Atari ST and ported to the Amiga instead of vice versa.

Although followed by a sequel, Captain Blood seems to have become something of a forgotten title. As inferior games find new life on smartphones or consoles, there is little talk of bringing back this gem to a new generation. It's a shame, because it's a true classic of the genre.

## Zombi - Ubisoft



Ubisoft's first title took inspiration from Day of the Dead. You control four survivors stranded on a remote island, fighting roaming

zombies and another team of survivors in search of helicopter fuel. A comic related the events leading up to the game, which was strongly praised for its atmospheric gameplay.

## North and South - Infogrames



A civil war era strategy game, that is to say a strategy game based in the civil war rather than a video game made in 1865, North & South was released across nearly all available systems in 1989.

Based on the Belgian comic series, Les Tuniques Bleues, you control either the North, which is to say the Union, or the South,

which is to say the racists, also known as the Confederate States of America.

The game combined action, strategy and humour into one enjoyable, well received package and was recently voted the tenth best Amiga game of all time.



Meanwhile other French software houses were still going strong, with Ubisoft taking their strong performance in the 8-bit arena into the 16-bit arena, releasing a number of successful games during this period across all formats.

However, Ubisoft arguably adopted a more, how shall we say it, commercial approach to their releases than some of their fellow publishers and with the best will in the world, Jimmy Connors Pro Tennis Tour isn't really up there with Flashback.

As future events will prove, Ubisoft's business model nonetheless proved more sustainable than their competitors, but it is hard to look back on their output with the same rose-tinted glasses that many gamers do with Delphine and Infogrames, who were leading the way in breaking new ground in the industry.

### Post-seize crisis

Gaming had moved on drastically since those early days in the 1980s and it was remarkable that the main software houses that started it all were still standing as the 32-bit era began.

In 1994 Delphine was overshadowed by the success of a subsidiary company, Adeline, which was set up after a disagreement within Delphine over the direction of the Alone in the Dark series. Adeline quickly made their mark with a stunning debut, Little Big Adventure, an isometric adventure game notable for its impressive full motion video cut scenes and quirky graphical style. The game was a huge success and was followed by an equally acclaimed sequel in 1997.

Meanwhile Delphine struggled with the

transition to the 3D era, and the sequel to Flashback, titled Fade to Black, received mixed reviews as the company began to focus its efforts on its successful Moto Racer series.

Ubisoft continued to go from strength to strength, particularly with the mega-selling Rayman series that debuted on the Playstation. Titus Software, who had opened offices worldwide, floated on the French stock exchange in 1996 and began a series of acquisitions while Infogrames also bought out a series of companies, including the legendary Ocean Software and Gremlin Interactive in the UK, massively increasing its debt in the process but also tripling its revenue.

While Rayman and Moto Racer were big successes for their respective companies, it's hard to escape the feeling that somewhere along the way to commercial success, the acclaimed uniqueness of the earlier titles had disappeared.

Whether this was due to the expansion of the video game market with the success of the Playstation, the globalisation of video gaming creating a certain amount of homogenisation, or companies refusing to take a risk on new ISPs that cost more and more to develop is up for debate.

Whatever the cause, it's impossible not to look back on the history of French gaming and see that the high water mark had already been passed.

Existing series' like Alone In The Dark stopped being innovators and started to follow the trends set by other titles that had moved the genre on further, culminating in the universally excoriated Alone In The Dark in 2008, which took the same name as the original but had none of the quality.

## Flashback - Delphine



While its similar predecessor Another World's use of rotoscope technology still impresses, Flashback's use of more modern motion capture technology took it a step further and created a fluid movement of characters unprecedented in the platformer genre. Combined with excellent hand-drawn backgrounds it created a realistic yet stylised game world to explore.

Today it stands as the bestselling French game of all time and while the critical acclaim tends to lie with Another World, the success of Flashback points to a more polished game that managed to increase its accessibility without in any way sacrificing its depth and originality.

Meanwhile new IPs were released but few gained enough of a foothold to create a credible series of games and where there were mega-sellers, many of them had been acquired through acquisitions or developed entirely by teams outside of France.

As Gordon Brown learnt to his cost, with every boom there follows a bust and by the early 2000s the seeds sown with a series of aggressive acquisitions were sprouting saplings of debt that dragged down Delphine. By the mid-2000s it was defunct, joined by Titus, which struggled to do much beyond its Moto Racer franchise and whose output had become sporadic and patchy.

Adeline, who had sandwiched the well-received Time Commando between the Little Big Adventure games, saw its core team sold off to Sega, leaving the existing company dormant until Delphine provided a new team to take on Moto Racer Advance for the Game Boy Advance. This game saw an unusual trifecta of French video game industry prowess, as Adeline developed it, Delphine produced it and Ubisoft published it to positive reviews in 2002.

Adeline were then tasked with a follow-up to Flashback titled Flashback Legends, which never saw the light of day before Adeline was folded along with Delphine in 2004.

The core team of Adeline who were sold to Sega ended up forming No Cliché, led by legendary Alone in the Dark designer, Frederick Raynal, who released a few titles on the Dreamcast that as you can imagine ended well for them. They split a few years after forming.

Meanwhile Infogrames policy of acquisitions had finally come unstuck. They had acquired GT Interactive and Hasbro several years before, which bought them a series of high-profile licenses such as Civilization and Unreal Tournament. Of more importance to the company's future was the ability to use the Atari name and properties, though the relationship between what became Atari Inc and Infogrames was confusing, as Infogrames licensed the use of the Atari brand for Atari Inc from Atari Interactive, which was based in California in the USA.

Within three years Infogrames was making a significant loss and the gravitational pull that saw them acquire so many licenses and companies started to unwind as franchise rights were sold off, some even going back to Hasbro, in an attempt to balance the books.

Although Infogrames released successful games under the Atari Inc brand, including the mega-selling Enter the Matrix, it wasn't enough and an initial partnership with Namco Bandai eventually turned into a Namco Bandai buyout.

## Another World - Delphine



Although it was stripped back graphically, Another World shook the gaming...er...world with its use of rotoscoped animation to depict the game's hero, Lester, as he is teleported to...a different planet when lightning strikes his lab while running an experiment using a particle accelerator.

In some respects it was a simple evolution of Prince of Persia as many of the gameplay mechanics were similar, involving running, jumping over obstacles and clinging onto ledges as you guide the hero and his alien sidekick in their journey to escape the dangers facing them in this strange new world.

The game undoubtedly took platform gaming to the next level, aiming for a cinematic look and feel in its scope and design, something it achieved admirably.

Another World showed people the potential in gaming and its influence is still being felt today in games like Outland.

Meanwhile its enduring popularity has prompted a re-release on iOS and constant talk of an official sequel after the failure of Heart of the Alien, which was released without the involvement of Another World creator, Eric Chahi.

## Rayman - Ubisoft



If Ubisoft have a 'modern' IP with iconic status, it is probably the platform series Rayman that fits the bill, having also spawned the popular Raving Rabbids spin-off franchise.

The series centres on the adventures of, unsurprisingly, Rayman, a creature with no limbs but, bizarrely, hands and feet, which can move independently of his body. The early development of the series mirrored the progression of video games from 2D to 3D and it has continued to be a leading title for Ubisoft with the release of any new console, with Rabbids Land being released as a Wii U launch title.



## Operation Stealth - Delphine

Developed by Flashback creator, Paul Cuisset and released under the James Bond licence in the USA, Operation Stealth is a classic spy adventure as you

attempt to track down the location of a missing stealth plane stolen from the United States Marine Corps.

The game includes many tropes of the spy genre, from red carnations, secret briefcase compartments and wonder gadgets like laser-firing watches, making it a perfect fit for the point-and-click genre.



## Little Big Adventure - Adeline



Little Big Adventure is an isometric action-adventure game set on the planet Twinsun, which has, wait for it, two suns. For the scientifically nerdy among you, this means the planet is held in a permanent suspension between the two suns, causing a polar region around its equator and probably lots of other scientific improbabilities the game never addresses.

The four races of Twinsun have been imprisoned in the Southern hemisphere by the evil but charmingly named, Dr. FunFrock.

As the game's protagonist, the imaginatively named Twinsen, you must solve puzzles, fight enemies and complete quests to defeat Funfrock, rescue your missus and free the indigenous races of Twinsun.

The game was a hit when released in 1994 but it still took two years to make its way to the Playstation, by which time the sequel was less than a year away.

The game is still highly thought of and was released on goodoldgames.com in 2011, when it was also revealed that a touch screen version and a remake were also being considered.

The fate of Infogrames mirrored the fate of so many software houses bought out by Infogrames years earlier as the Infogrames name was consigned to history and their assets merged into a single Atari entity.

### La petite mort

It was a sad end to some prestigious companies, albeit one mirrored by events around the video game world. Nonetheless it seems unjust that the companies that produced groundbreaking titles like Alone in the Dark, Flashback and Another World suffered such an ignominious fate.

Then again, some might consider it rough justice after acquisitions of treasured UK software houses like Ocean were then promptly renamed or merged without a thought for their history.

In other words, you might argue that the cheese eating surrender monkeys got exactly what they deserved.

### Affaire de Famille

However, not all French software houses suffered and today Ubisoft, founded in 1986 by the brothers Yves and Michael Guillemot, stands as the largest video game developer and publisher in France. However, most of Ubisoft's many IPs are developed in different countries and few are the product of Ubisoft's French offices in Paris, Montpellier and Annecy, most notably Rayman Rabbids, the Tom Clancy Ghost Recon series and Just Dance.

Ubisoft's mega-success was obviously too big for one family, and Michael Guillemot left the company in 1999 to form Gameloft, where he quickly repeated his success and turned Gameloft into arguably the pre-eminent mobile game developer and publisher in the world today, investing heavily in the market even before the iPhone revolutionised mobile gaming forever.

A romantic could argue that of all the video game companies that rose in France in the late 1980s, it's slightly tragic that the one that remains is Ubisoft, which lacks the classic titles and history of Delphine and Infogrames.

That would be harsh on Ubisoft, which today publishes some of the world's biggest titles such as Assassin's Creed, Assassin's Creed II and Assassin's Creed III: Turtles in Time, even if the Assassin's Creed franchise is a product of Ubisoft's Montreal branch rather than its French division (while Gameloft handles the mobile versions).

Lest you think they're a bit of a one-trick pony, nothing could be further from the truth, as

## Alone in the Dark - Infogrames



Alone in the Dark is recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records as the first 3D survival horror game and was a huge hit upon its release in 1992, spawning multiple sequels in the space of just a couple of years.

It foreshadowed the dominance of 3D gaming and accelerated the development of one of the biggest genres of the late 1990s and early 2000s and today it regularly features in lists of the best or most influential games ever.

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six, Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3 and Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Vegas 2 will attest.

To get serious for a moment, it does no service to gaming not to base your company on sound finances. It could easily be argued that the sudden burst of success earned by Delphine and Infogrames led to an overconfidence that brought about their downfall while Ubisoft continued a steady and evidently sustainable growth that meant they could release acclaimed but commercially unsuccessful titles like Beyond Good & Evil.

Gameloft too has followed this pattern and it has continued to grow and find success commercially as the mobile gaming market has transformed at a much faster pace than console gaming ever has (in ten years phones went from Snake to the iPhone), winning the Pocket Gamer Developer of the Year award in 2011.

Today, French developers are still scoring big, genre-defining hits. Arkane Studios were the developers behind 2012's arguably most acclaimed title, Dishonored, a steampunk-esque stealth-action game published by Skyrim developers Bethesda Softworks after Arkane were acquired by Bethesda's owners, Zenimax Media.

The independent scene is also continuing to release titles with many legendary developers still producing games today, from Frederick Rayal's bOxOn, to Flashback creator, Paul Cuisset's AMY. Several of these are actually published by Ubisoft, who have shown a commendable commitment to supporting independent French developers going back to the late 1980s when they published the sci-fi point-and-click adventure game B.A.T. and its sequel by French developers Computer's Dream.

Also worth mentioning is Click Team, who developed the innovative Multi-Media Fusion project that allows people who lack coding experience to create games and applications across many platforms, including iOS, Xbox 360 and Android.

Although the late 80s and early 90s will undoubtedly live on as the 'golden era' of French video game development for many people, not least because it's the era they fondly remember from their younger days, the French video game industry as a whole is arguably more dominant today, with both Ubisoft and Gameloft both powerhouses of their respective fields.

So as they mourn Gerard Depardieu bugging off to become a Russian citizen, let's raise a glass of sparkling white wine to our Gallic cousins as we salute the French and their awesome contribution to video gaming. **RF**







## IAN CHAPMAN FROM ARCADE DREAMS TELLS ALL ON WHAT IN THE ARCADE WORLD IS A SUPERGUN?

**RF** What is a Supergun?

IAN : The actual term ' Supergun ' dates back over 20 years from what I remember, back when the arcades were still the in thing. Back then if you wanted to play the latest games you went to the arcades.

Clever folk wired up there own home devices to play arcade PCB's at home and the term for these devices was born 'Superguns'.

**RF** Who would use such a device?

IAN : Who you say? Well, I guess anyone that likes to remember playing the proper arcade games and even those too young to remember. I have one set up in the loft and my kids enjoy playing 'Retro Hour' as I call it. Space can be a premium these days and so can female pressure, 'I don't want that arcade machine in MY house' seems to be a common response and thus you can still play all the old arcade games for a fraction of the space and a smaller cost.

**RF** Are there different kinds?

IAN : Yes, at present there are five versions and possibly another in the pipeline. Why five? The idea of the different versions was to try and cover all the different outputs and features that people may need. The Mk 1 was the first version, designed in 2004, but not in full production till 2006, featuring SCART TV output and 3 button Sega Megadrive controller support. Then there was a board designed for Neo Geo MVS support (which requires 4 buttons for proper game support) so the Mk 4 was made. Then customers wanted to use their own controllers on the superguns so the Mk 3 was made with screw terminals so they could wire in their own joypads and play with them. With the advent of Plasma and LCD TV's the Mk 2/5 were created that have better compatibility with the more modern TV's (although as the purists will say, you get the best picture quality with SCART outputs on CRT TV's as that's the way PCB's were meant to be played).

**RF** Are these good devices for using in home made cabs?

IAN : Yes. You can easily adapt any of the motherboard models to work in a home made or original arcade cabinet. For example the Mk III can be used to replace the jamma loom because you can connect the arcade PCB directly to it. You can replace the arcade monitor with a domestic CRT TV because the JAMMA video and TV signals are very similar.

**RF** How did you get involved in Vogatek Superguns?

It was about 2 years ago when I bought a couple of boards and was genuinely impressed with the design and price of the product and started to sell them amongst the various games forums I was on as they make for great quick test boards for when you can't get to your arcade machine to test a board or if your house/partner really doesn't want a cab in it.

If things go well we have plans for more products, watch this space. Check out their Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arcadedreams/316117395176450>

# FUSION

Game : C&C Red Alert 2  
Year : 2000  
System : PC

Back in the year 2000 I was commuting back and fore to London from Warwickshire - the train journey each way took 1hr 20mins from Euston to Coventry and became quite chore.

I purchased myself a nice laptop to help with the journey and the first game to be played on my new shiny hardware was Red Alert 2. I owned every title in the C&C franchise to date and had played through each title to the end so the prospect of playing each new instalment filled me with excitement. So with laptop booted, headphones plugged in and Red Alert 2 loaded I started to play, get drawn in and get totally addicted once agin to the C&C world.

I played though the Allies campaign first, the graphics and detail so much more than previous titles. With all the C&C games it's a matter of setting up a base, collecting ore/money, building an army and defeating the enemy before they obliterate you. Simple yet captivating in it's gameplay the 12 ally missions were soon completed - the Soviets defeated. And over the next number of days, the Soviets had revenge on the Allies.

I got some funny looks on those journeys from the passengers sitting next to me - i did notice though that many were watching my progress in the corner of their eye and willing me on to beat the waves of enemies!

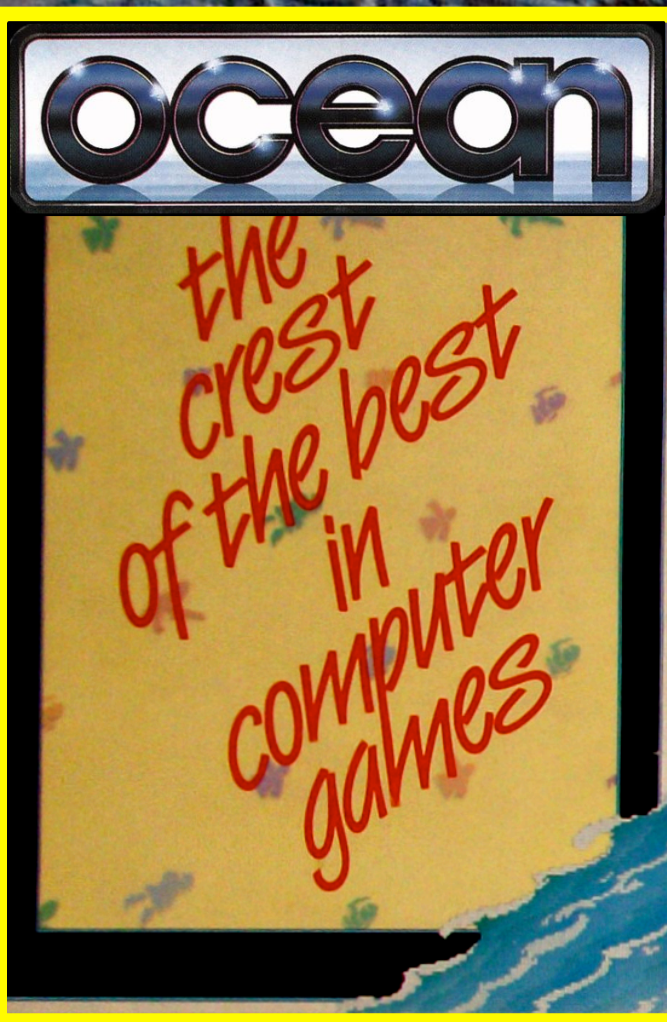
Red Alert is a classic - great looks, great sounds, great gameplay and two captivating campaign stories. Add in the Skirmish mode and Multiplayer and there is hours of play in this game - a game that even now stands up to current RTS games like Starcraft 2.

And then C&C : Generals came over and took over my life once more. **RF**









## PART 2 OF RETRO FUSION'S EXCLUSIVE OCEAN ARTICLE WHERE EX-EMPLOYEE MARK JONES TALKS ABOUT HIS TIME AT THE ILLUSTRIOUS OCEAN SOFTWARE



A game was being developed out of house by some folks called 'Sensible Software' on the Commodore 64. I'd not heard of them, they were 64 only guys. They'd written a game for Ocean called 'Parallax' that had been well received but it had only come out on the Commodore, there had been no Spectrum version.

Gary Bracey had loved the early working version that had been sent to him of this new game and set about getting a Spectrum translation developed almost alongside the C64 version. Due to there not being an Amstrad programmer free this version went out of house. This game was called 'Wizball'. I was moved from my current desk into a little room on the other side of the cellars and teamed up with a fellow I shall refer to only by his nickname, Catweazle. He was a newly

employed programmer and had previously had a game published by 'The Edge'. Catweazle was an odd fellow. Initially we got on fine, he could be quite funny sometimes with his dry sense of humour. He didn't smell, he didn't smoke lots (which could be annoying to a non smoker in the little shut off rooms in the basement), and things went well at first though he did freak me out a little with his wispy beard and long, greasy hair which earned him his Catweazle nickname amongst the staff downstairs. I started by animating a 16 frame spinning ball with a face on it. This was hard! Again, I'd not animated an awful lot and remember getting quite a bit of help from Simon Butler, who started, I think, a week or so after me.

I'd heard of Simon. I'd played his games back home while I was a school boy. I'd bought 'Never Ending Story' & 'N.O.M.A.D.' on the Spectrum. Simon, to me, was famous. And here he was, helping me. We became good buddies. We still are, 25 years later. Simon can be very, very funny. He's a scouser. I love the scouse sense of humour (I was a massive Beatles fan



Joffa, Simon Butler, Mark Jones and Jim Bagley at Byte Back in 2009



Bill Harbison, Mark Jones and Simon Butler at Play Expo in 2012



remember, and I was a fan of their humour as much as their music). Simon helped me lots while I was at Ocean. Simon gave me and made me listen to a tape of XTC's 'Skylarking' album and their alter egos 'The Dukes Of Stratosphere', two albums that formed part of the soundtrack to my time at Ocean and started to open my head up to other music. He was older than me (and still is) I'd just left school and just happened to be the youngest member of the Ocean team at the time. Also, another Mark Jones, Mark K. Jones had started a few weeks before. So I earned the nick name 'Junior', Mark K. Jones was a bit older than me so he was known as 'Senior'. That's also the reason I always put the 'R' in any game credits. I didn't want anyone to get either of us confused. That didn't work. Even now I sometimes get messages thanking me for the "brilliant work you did on the Amstrad conversion of 'Renegade'". No, that wasn't me that was 'Mark K. Jones'. Ho hum! Anyway, back to the subject. I had to have two goes at doing the 'Wizball' animation, the first one was a tad rubbishy but worked as a good practice run. I started again and this one was perfected and used after a good week of changing a pixel here and a pixel there.

Every now and again we'd receive the latest version of 'Wizball' from the Sensible guys and I would sit there with a pencil and piece of paper and draw the new graphics from the screen in order to translate them onto the Spectrum. With each floppy disc there'd be new levels, new baddies, new sections and I would get them on to the Spectrum screen. It didn't take me long. I did the catellite, the Ying Yang ball, the Police baddy that would come onto the screen if you were taking too long, lots of bouncing about baddies, all the graphics that were in the Commodore version were now on the Spectrum. The only headache I had was trying to get that Mount Rushmore graphic translated. That proved a problem, my version looked pathetic. After a whole morning of trying to do it by hand I solved it by sellotaping a piece of acetate to the Commodore 64 TV screen, playing the 64 version and pausing it when Mount Rushmore was on the screen, tracing it onto the acetate with a pen then sticking the acetate onto my Spectrum



Bob Wakelin signing A3 posters for The History of Ocean book

## Dingo - A new Spectrum Game

In the Spring of 2011 I got wind of someone called Sokurah of 'Tardis Remakes' on the 'World Of Spectrum' forum who was going to convert a game called 'Dingo' on to the Spectrum. He was looking for someone to do the graphics.

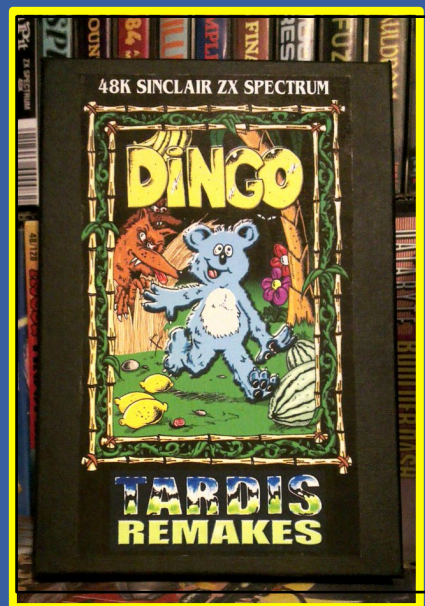
The thing that caught my attention was that it was an unconverted and forgotten arcade game from 1983 by Ashby Computers & Graphics, who went on to form the mighty 'Ultimate Play The Game'. So I fired it up on MAME and it looked simple enough.

I had been thinking it might be fun to do another Spectrum game again for a while, I didn't think it would take long so I volunteered my services. I didn't even know if I could do it anymore, I hadn't made any Spectrum graphics since 1991, 20 years ago. Once all the in game graphics were done, which I did in just over one day, I thought I'd have a go at doing the music for the game. I had provided the music for the Spectrum 'Arkanoid' back in the day so went about making music for 'Dingo' in exactly the same way.

Then we had the idea of making a few tapes to sell for cost at a retro games show for the launch of the game. Not having ever done the art for a game cover before I said I'd try, not thinking I'd come up with anything usable, but I did it and it turned out rather nice.

Next was the loading screen, which I was worried about the most, could I still do it after all this time? After a few abortive attempts I think I nailed it and produced a screen to be proud of.

Then the game came out and it went down really well. It all went swimmingly, it was great fun to do, working with Sokurah was a breeze, the game looked great, played great and turned out to have that 'one more go' factor. We sold out of physical tapes at the show and a big pile of jolly reviews popped up on various blogs and we got a glowing review in 'Retro Gamer' magazine. I think we managed to make a game that could quite easily have sat along side the early 'Ultimate' titles had it been written and released in 1983. Be nice to know what Chris and Tim Stamper would say if they ever saw their early game converted to the Spectrum. I hope they'd like it.



monitor and drawing round the traced image on the screen. Crude as hell, but it worked! After some time we were handed the finished 64 version. It was done and dusted. I made sure all the Spectrum graphics were done but there was one problem. The Spectrum version had fallen way behind. I don't know what the problem was but Catweazle hadn't made as much progress as everyone had expected and it was looking a bit ropey, a bit bare, various bits had still not been implemented and, among other things, baddies kept disappearing while they should have remained on the screen. When asked about this Catweazle replied "They're hyper spacing!" Whoops, no they are not, that's what anyone else would call a bug! Then, I made the mistake of leaving my wage





The original Wizard's Lair design. Right, how it looked in the final game.



slip on my desk. I had just gotten a flat with the other Mark Jones (with a K!) and the rent was £80 a week between us. Only earning a whopping £90 a week after tax I had gone to Gary and pointed out that I wasn't really earning enough to live on. I had passed my initiation (the 'MagMax' screen) so was given a little wage raise so that I didn't have to live on bread and lard through the week. Catweazle had found my wage slip and gone to Gary and moaned at him that I was getting more than him. He had already had a game published, I hadn't and he should be getting more. With the risk apparent that had Gary not obliged then Catweazle could have walked out three quarters of the way through he got his own way. And I got a bollocking for leaving my

**"A menu was added, the music put in and it was tidied up and that was that. It was released."**

wage slip out. Eeeek!

While Catweazle appeared to be beavering away on getting the code finished, slouched down in his chair in front of his Tandy TRS80 (the machine all the Spectrum programmers used to write their code on), I got the loading screen to 'Wizball' done and managed to do a better one than my previous 'MagMax' effort. I got some help from Simon on the initial layout but 95% of it was my own work and is the piece of work I'm most remembered for now. I enjoyed doing that screen immensely and it still looks good today. Again, I tried really hard as this was my first proper project. It had my name on it. I tinkered with it for a few days after finishing it.

One morning, Catweazle didn't turn up to work. He was never seen again. No one at Ocean ever saw

him again. He'd walked out before the game was finished.

'Wizball' on the Spectrum still had lots of stuff missing. I'd drawn and animated various bits that weren't yet in the game. The Ying Yang, the Cop sprite, some baddies, the whole shoot 'em up bonus section wasn't there and the Wizard's lair looked rubbish, most of the graphics for that weren't there, just the bare bones of a room when it should have been a full screens worth. The game code was tidied up by Ocean veteran Paul Owens (no mean feat so I'm told, going through another coder's code). A menu was added, the music put in and it was tidied up and that was that. It was released. I was a little disappointed. It could have been so much better.

Then the reviews started to come out. I couldn't believe it. This game that in my eyes was unfinished had gained itself a coveted 'Crash Smash' award with an overall mark or 92%. Being gob smacked is an understatement. I was so pleased. So 2 issues were bought and one ripped up for inclusion in my folder. 2 more great reviews followed, a 10 out of 10 and a 'Classic' in 'Sinclair User' and an 8 out of 10 in 'Your Spectrum', I couldn't have hoped for more. I just regretted the fact that, had everything been put in the game that should have done, then the reviews would have been even better. I'd still like to see something along the lines of 'Wizball Redux' on the Spectrum, a new version complete with everything the superior C64 version contained. All the Spectrum graphics were done back in 1987. And they still exist.

The next project I was given was to convert 'Gryzor' from the arcade to the ZX Spectrum. Paul Owens, who had just finished off 'Wizball', was the programmer so I was teamed up with him for this and the next two games I was to work on. Downstairs at Ocean there was a room that had earned the nickname of 'Arcade Alley' where the boards to arcade games that were in the process of conversion were connected up to monitors and joysticks by the electronics guy Steve





## A further five of Mark's Favourite Retro Games



### Knight Lore - Spectrum

Jaws dropped, over the WHOLE of the UK. A huge impression on, basically, everyone who had a home computer when this came out. This was being loaded up and gawped at in every computer shop, boys bedrooms and school computer clubs all over.



### Avalon - Spectrum

I have warm memories of being 14 years old and playing this up in my bedroom on cold, wet school nights. Great atmosphere, great medieval sounding tunes, great storyline AND you got this super little old looking map and scroll in the package.



### Yoshi's Island - SNES

In the 90's I had a multitude of consoles and a PC and didn't really get into them that much, only owning a handful or so of games for each. This one though was brilliant. One of the best platform games ever, delightfully cute graphics and ingenious layouts.



### Kameo - XBOX 360

I only got to play this in 2011 and even then, 6 years after it came out, it made a huge impression on me. One of the most beautiful games I've ever played and it reeks of the atmosphere that the 'Ultimate' games 'Atic Atac' and 'Knight Lore' had.



### Skyrim- Various

New games don't really grab my attention anymore. Too much time is needed to get in to them and I just haven't got the patience. This one though broke that rule for me and I got well and truly sucked in. Brilliant looking and totally atmospheric.

Lavache. It was a long thin room and also held the archive of magazines that Ocean had amassed through the years. The process was a relatively painless one. 'Gryzor' was connected up, play the game (on 'Free Play' of course) and draw the various bits and pieces you saw on to paper then draw as near as the equivalent you could on the Spectrum screen.

The only downer for me on this project was that 'Crash' had asked for a demo for their first cover tape. I'd done the graphics for the first level and enough animations for them to have something playable and Paul Owens had said this was OK and he should have something to give them in time for their deadline. For some reason, after a few weeks, it became apparent that the demo wouldn't be ready. 'Crash' had already announced in issue 44 that a demo of 'Gryzor' would be included on their cover tape. Come the next issue that contained the tape they had, instead, included a demo of Andrew Deakin & Ivan Horn's 'Athena' and said "We were hoping to have 'Gryzor' as well but development of the program continues even now". I was a little disappointed not to have had a demo of my latest game on the 'Crash' tape but it was out of my hands. Anyway, I forgot about it and the conversion of the game came to a close and the game was released.

Then the reviews started to come out. We had garnered a screen shot on the cover of issue 69 of 'Sinclair User' with the words "First Review" above it. It received a glowing double page spread with a 9 out of 10 mark. Great, I thought. 'Your Sinclair' had given it a 'MegaGame' status with an overall 9 out of 10. Brilliant! Even Spanish magazine 'Micro Hobby' had devoted 2 pages to it and given it good marks across the board. Get in! I waited with some trepidation for, in my mind, the most important review, the mighty 'Crash'. Were they going to 'Smash' it? I really hoped so. The other mags had all liked it so surely 'Crash' would love it. We'd not had one bad review so far so surely the 'Crash' one would be good. Issue 49 arrived and I scoured the review index to see what page it was on (22 if you were wondering!), turned to the page.....ugh!.....49%?!  
My first crappy review.

"Gryzor is a poor game graphically" ...ouch!  
"Unfortunately the addictive nature of the game is outweighed by the rubbish graphics" ...doh!  
"The graphics are poor and badly coloured with appalling

animation" ...yow!

There was an overall mark of 45% for the graphics with an overall mark of 49%. I was a little gutted. I couldn't work out why there was such a difference from all the other glowing reviews and this 'Crash' one. How could every one else like it so much and 'Crash' obviously thought it was a load of tosh? I pondered. Could it just be that the reviewers were in a bad mood? Or really were they pissed off that Paul didn't get the demo ready in time and were wreaking revenge in the only way they could? We hadn't promised a demo to any other magazine and they all loved it. We had let

**"The review wasn't put in my folder. I quietly ignored this blemish on my graphics career. Though I am over it now..."**

'Crash' down and this was the result? I guess I'll never know.

The review wasn't put in to my folder. I quietly ignored this blemish on my graphics career. Though I'm over it now and inserted a print out of it in to the folder last year. The wound has healed somewhat!

At some point I'd also had a hand in helping to design 'Platoon'. I was kipping in principle designer Simon Butler's house, I didn't like living in the house I shared with Mark K. Jones, newly appointed C64 graphics guy John Palmer had taken my place there, and recall sitting down with some sheets of A4 in Simon's living room and throwing some ideas around. The majority of the design was his, he had done this many times before, but I came up with the tunnel sequence where an enemy soldier would come up out of the flooded tunnel and attack you with a large knife.

By this time I was comfortable in my new job and had settled into the routine and culture of downstairs at Ocean Software. When I wasn't at work I wanted to be there. I never dreaded going in at this point though did find having to go in to work and having nothing to do, when I'd finished all my graphic work and was waiting for the programmer to finish his, before I could be started on a completely new project, a little tedious. It was during



these periods that I'd end up doing various bits and pieces like the 'Arkanoid II - Revenge Of Doh', 'Mutants', and 'Tai-Pan' loading screens. I did the graphics for an Ocean Ice Hockey game that never appeared during one of these periods. There was always something exciting going on. I did feel like a small part of the hotbed of creativity that we were all part of down stairs in 6 Central Street. All of our in house games were getting 95% brilliant reviews. The only rosey games seemed to be the few that were developed out of house. Though that went out of the window when a game we had all seen demos of and was known as 'Foot and Mouth' was renamed at the last minute to 'Head Over Heels' and was released to deservedly glowing reviews. Gary Bracey's plan of building a top class in-house team to develop all the cream of the crop titles was seemingly paying off. Ocean was on a roll and was widely thought of at the time as THE software house in the UK. The awards were coming in, the great reviews continued, top licences were being bought and it seemed like, for a while, we could do very little wrong.

I worked on two more Spectrum games during this period of my time at Ocean. The first was 'Vindicator', which originally was planned to be a follow up to 'Green Beret'. This was an original title designed by Simon Butler. The original Bob Wakelin artwork had contained the words 'Green Beret II' but this had to be hastily hidden by Ocean's art director Steve Blower when Konami wanted too much money for its use. Had the very first design been followed then it may well have looked like a follow up to their original arcade game but as it wasn't to be known as the second part anymore the game veered away from the original concept the further we went on and any resemblance seen in the finished game to 'Green Beret' was just passing. The development had riled the designer somewhat with the Commodore and Amstrad versions following the design to the tee but the Spectrum version went off on a tangent in some places for no other reason other than the programmer wanted to do certain things his way.

It was also during this period that Keith Chegwin came down to film an insert for a children's TV program he was making called 'Chegwin Checks It Out'. In the short clip you can see various shots of the Ocean cellars and some of the less shy people who worked down there and an awful interview with me that lives on as a YouTube file. I can be seen pretending to work on 'The Vindicator' through the sort of glasses Deirdre from Coronation Street made popular in the 1980s!

'The Vindicator' got OK reviews. Nothing brilliant. 80% in 'Crash' (issue 57, page 20), 8 out of 10 in 'Your Sinclair' (issue 35, page 34) and a crappy 62% in 'Sinclair User' (issue 79, page 53).

Another arcade conversion followed, 'Dragon Ninja'. Hmmmm. It was never a great arcade game in the first place and I never had any interest in the majority of fighting games. They just didn't interest me. Bill Harbison had started work on this and had been teamed up with my programmer Paul Owens because near the end of 'The Vindicator' I'd taken two weeks holiday. There was no hanging around waiting for my return and Paul was put with Bill. When I got back I was asked to help out by designing some of the backgrounds. It wasn't much fun. I wasn't used to having to share the graphics with someone else, something that wouldn't bother me at all now. The loading screen was OK though, that was quite fun to do. The game's a pile of poo. It hasn't aged

well at all with its simplistic game play and monochromatic graphics. It earned a whopping 46% in 'Crash' though Sinclair User gave it a respectable 82% when it was re-issued on Ocean's budget label 'The Hit Squad' for £2.99 a year or so later.

I remember spending a good month or so after this doing more or less nothing. I fiddled about on the Commodore 64, I think I was going to be put on a 64 racing game arcade conversion. It never happened.

One day I was told that, "This afternoon, you are going to the cinema to see 'Rambo III'". I was going to be to work on the ST and Amiga versions of the game and I needed to see the film first. I have no recollection of why I didn't go with everyone else. Maybe I was off that day. Anyway, I went to the Odeon on Manchester's Oxford Road and fell asleep half way through the film. Ha!

I don't remember much about working on this. I only worked on the 3D tank sequence and it was my first foray into the world of 16 bit graphics with hundreds of colours. Not only now did I have to get the shape of the sprites and back ground graphics right all the shading had to look right too. Things took five times as long to draw and animate as they did before. I didn't really enjoy drawing the same soldier, bullet, tanks, planes and explosions over and over again, each time slightly bigger than the last. Hey ho, it couldn't all be jollity and light.

I left Ocean not long after. I should have stuck it out. But I didn't.

I would find myself back in the basement of 6 Central Street again just over a year later working on the nightmare that was the 'Total Recall' licence. The story of that is even more twisted and convoluted than anything I've talked about here. We just haven't enough room for that now. Maybe another time. **RF**

## The History of Ocean

A new book documenting the complete story of Ocean is currently in production. The Kickstarter for the book completed just before Christmas and interviews with the Ocean crew are underway - by the time you read this we will have interviewed David Ward and Jon Woods - the owners of Ocean, and plan to have a Q/A and individual interviews at Revival.

Further pre-orders for the book can be purchased from the Retro Fusion site - [www.retrofusion.me.uk](http://www.retrofusion.me.uk).

The book should be complete by the end of the year and launched in time for the Christmas break.





# FAVOURITE



## WE ASKED ROGER KEAN, THE CREATOR OF ZZAP! 64 MAGAZINE, TO TALK ABOUT HIS FAVOURITE ISSUE!

I had a favourite issue of Crash. It was pretty easy to decide on that – the first issue, the first-born, the first of a kind. Zzap!64 is more difficult. Crash I nurtured from embryonic concept to printed edition, but with Zzap it was different because Chris Anderson was employed by Newsfield to create a C64 magazine from scratch with Crash as a template, and this he most successfully did.

However, that meant my involvement with Zzap was at a remove. All the editorial work took place down in Chris' home town of Yeovil and the initial reviewing team of Bob Wade, Gary Penn and Julian Rignall were largely unknown quantities, beyond a first-issue launch party held in Ludlow. Production took place in Ludlow, so I saw the galleys come back from the typesetter and saw the pages in layout, but that was the extent of my involvement. When I took over the editorial late in June 1985, my first issue was No.4, the one with the Beach Head II cover, and Zzap!64 had already established its identity. In consequence, I can't truly say I had a favourite issue of Zzap over the years.

In all of that first year before Gary Penn took over the editorial cudgels, the team produced some wonderful issues, with a run of fabulous Oliver Frey covers. Oliver often said afterwards that it was the influence and ideas of Gary Penn and Julian Rignall that drove the imagery and their enthusiasm that inspired him to some of his best work. The addition of Gary Liddon to bring the team up to strength (after Bob Wade opted to stay down in Yeovil) introduced an even greater degree of zaniness to Zzap, and my main task was to rein in the whole careering vehicle and keep it on track for the murderous schedules. Although 'Shadow Spiel' had only a passing relevance to C64 gaming, the pages were

among the most fun to put together, force-fed from Liddon's brain-fried sense of humour and help from the Rubber Fish of Stupidity.

I don't think as a whole package the issues of the first year and a half were ever bettered, which isn't to say that in terms of content and approach there were not good later periods, Gordon Houghton's Zzap still comes particularly to mind after all these years. So, if I never had a favourite issue of Zzap, I certainly had a few favourite covers, favoured only in that they stood above the others of the period by a micron. 'Skyfox' (#5) is one of those Frey dynamic compositions that flies out at you. 'The Mighty Zoidzilla' (#8) is another thriller, and a definite favourite is issue 12's 'Wild Sounds from the C64' which combined imagery from the music video of Duran Duran's 'Wild Boys' with a Jaz Rignall look-alike dancer.

Because of its association with the typically aggressive Newsfield stance in the face of attack, I always enjoyed issue 15. Zzap had recently been slated in the press by the publisher of a rival magazine as nothing more than a 'fluffy lollypop magazine.' Red rag to the bull, of course. The team wanted to feature U.S. Gold's new golf release 'Leaderboard', but everyone agreed that of all sports, golf is one of the more boring to put on a cover. The 'lollypop' slur had rankled and there was no debate over my suggestion to reflect a golfer teeing off in the sun shades of a provocatively sexy girl as she slurps on a flesh-pink lollypop oblivious to the crowd of teenage boys gawking at her and not at the game, and clearly thinking thoughts not in the least suited to a 'family' magazine. It was the barely controlled irresponsibility of Zzap that made it the 'way of life' vehicle it became for so many readers. Relish again the editorial for issue 15:

### BRITAIN'S BEST SELLING FLUFFY LOLLIPOP MAGAZINE

– Anthony Jacobson, Commodore Computing International

### FOR FLUFFY LOLLIPOP SUCKERS

Yep, the lollypop season is definitely here, the heat of the halls at the 7th Commodore Show had everybody sucking drinks on sticks, and back at base in Ludlow, June and the Carnival arrives with hot weather and hordes of lollypop-sucking tourists. ZZAP! owes a deep debt of gratitude to the publisher of CCI for pointing out to us that there's more money to be made from talking about lollipops (even fluffy ones) than from boring old computer games. Apart from an issue packed with helpful hints on how to suck the various flavours (starts page 202), comparisons between the frozen and sticky-sweet varieties, things you can do with the sticks once sucking is complete and vital first aid tips for frozen lollies that come apart at the seams on the first bite – apart from all this, there are a few more reviews (of computer games) than usual.

They don't publish magazines like Zzap!64 any more! **RF**



# HOMEBREW REVIEW

Alex Ross-Shaw reviews some of the most notable homebrew games released since the last issue



## RGCD 16K Cart Compo 2012

The RGCD C64 16k cartridge competition was started in 2011 and has quickly become one of the most anticipated homebrew competitions in the retro scene. Having a deadline and severe memory restrictions seems to bring out the best in developers and the entries over the past two years have displayed incredible diversity and quality, featuring a number of demakes, remakes, ports and true originals and 2012 was no different. There were too many entries to cover in Retro Fusion but here are the games judged to be in this year's top three.

### Super Bread Box

The winner of the 2012 competition, Super Bread Box is a demake of the famous indie game Super Crate Box, and what a demake it is. It's made by Paul Koller, whose entry in the last competition, C64anabalt (another demake) finished runner-up.

The aim of the single-screen platformer is simply to collect as many crates as possible while fending off infinite waves of enemies. It's mad, wild and endlessly addictive, not to mention superbly ported from the original.



### Assembloids

Assembloids is another demake, this time based on the flash game Quartet, the maker of which was involved in this version. Although it finished in second place, for many people Assembloids was the surprise hit of this year's competition.

Everything about the game is highly polished, from the quality SID rendition of the original's music, the crisp graphics and frantic gameplay, all tightly packed into a 16k game



### Wonderland

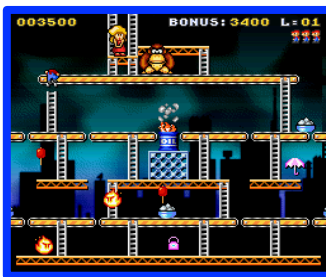
Wonderland is a wonderful (see what I did there?) Zelda-clone that just falls short of brilliance but is a quality title nonetheless. Your quest is to find four crystals and place them on the altar of winds, which will presumably save the universe/rescue the princess/grant you super-awesome powers – delete as applicable.

Your quest takes you through an amazingly large number of screens given the 16k size limit. A full 64k release is on the cards, which will hopefully provide a bit more variety and depth to an otherwise excellent release on a system that is lacking in decent Zelda-clones.





## Classic Kong Complete - SNES



A port of the original 1981 arcade classic made its way onto the SNES last year and is now revised and

expanded to include all the original levels. It makes the most of the SNES' graphics capabilities and really, what else is there to say about Donkey Kong? Play it.

## Dave Infuriators - Sam Coupe



A perpetual motion platformer similar to Heart Stealer – One Key Version that came out on the ZX Spectrum last year, you play the titular Dave, who wakes up to find himself stuck in perpetual motion, as you do.

To avoid having your head explode, you have to escape eight levels of devious design, aided or hindered by numerous types of platforms that speed you up, throw you in the air and slow you down and so on.

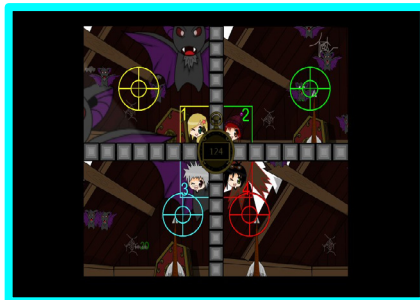
It's an impressively well put together package with fab music and graphics



## 2D House of Terror - DC

2D House of Terror is a four-player party game that is conceptually sound but poorly executed.

Graphically it's a mixed bag and some of the 'Engrish' is terrible. If the gameplay was engaging it would at least redeem it but overall it's a nice idea that is not up to snuff.



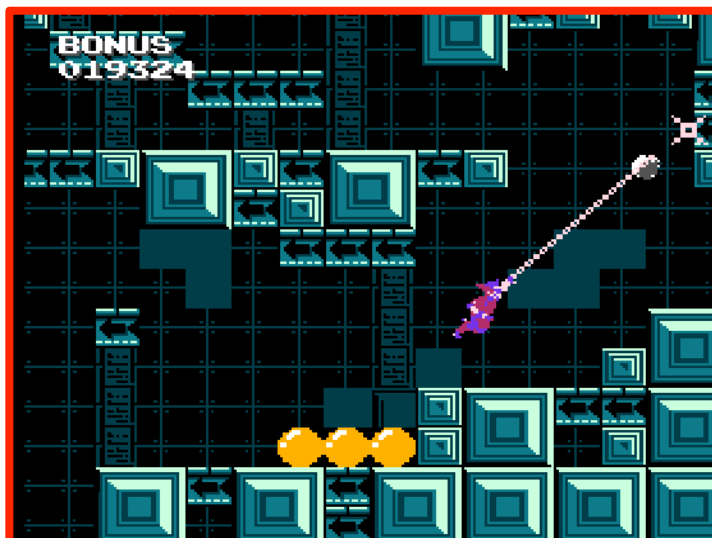
## Dux - DC

Released in 2009 and re-issued last year, Dux, is a side-scrolling shoot 'em up that focuses more on big sprites and colours than 'bullet hell' insanity. Although experienced

schmup gamers may disagree, it's not a game you can pick up and quickly master. Dux is a solid shooter and for a tenner it is worth getting if your a fan of the genre.



## Streemerz - NES



The indie and mobile gaming world is proving fertile ground for inspiration to retro developers of late, as the games covered in this Homebrew Review prove. The great thing is that many of these demakes - games ported to older systems - such as Streemerz, are absolutely excellent.

Based on a flash game of the same name, the original was created as a mock-NES game so it was something of an inevitability that someone would try to cram the whole thing onto an actual NES, and they've done so admirably.

The game is a platformer in the Bionic Commando vein with plenty of humour and alternative play modes thrown in for good

measure. It strikes that perfect but elusive balance of being a true test of platforming skill without ever feeling unfair or impossible. It's available as a free download and is comfortably one of the best NES homebrews ever made.



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## Welcome to the Retro Section



You have arrived at the Retro, or Lifestyle, section of magazine as it is lovingly called. Here you will find articles on those kind of things that provoke you to shout out 'I had one of those', or 'I remember that'. Any of you read Dandy as a child? My kids read it now - let us know in the Retro Fusion forum - [www.retrofusion.me.uk](http://www.retrofusion.me.uk)

## Dandy goes digital

[www.dandy.com](http://www.dandy.com)

Britain's longest running comic, The Dandy, left the physical realm at the end of last year and became a bunch of pixels in the digital sky.

The first digital edition was launched to coincidence with the comic's 75th birthday and is now available on the iPad, one of which can be

bought for a mere 1,000 weeks' worth of pocket money.

Thankfully the comic is significantly cheaper than an iPad, with a year's subscription costing £29.99. The app itself is actually free, with in-app credits that can be bought for real money and then used to buy comic's within the app.

The comic had seen sales fall from its heyday when it sold two million copies a week to just eight thousand.

There's been no word on how sales have gone but the transition has been inevitable for at least a decade.

The Beano has retained a paper-edition for now and has probably managed to

extend its lifespan by outlasting The Dandy but surely it's only a matter of time before it follows its rival to a life online.

Of course digital-only comics mean an end to the occasional lollypop stuck to the cover of your comic. Boo.





# Revival of Retro Sweets

## ALEX TROWERS PUTS HIS LAST REMAINING TEETH TO THE TEST IN THE ONLINE SWEETY MARKET PLACE - ANYONE FOR A SHERBERT DIP?

As a child I had a sweet tooth. As I have grown up (although there are those that would dispute that bit) I have retained said tooth. In fact, it may well be the only one I have left.

Any talk of sweets by people above a certain age will almost always result in one of the following phrases:

"[insert chocolate bar name here] have gotten much smaller"

"I remember paying 4p/6p/8p/10p for a packet of Polos"

"How many packets of Space Dust could you put in your mouth at once?"

"They should totally bring back Spangles"

By now you should be feeling a combination of effects. Firstly, your tastebuds should be hankering for a particular flavour. Secondly, a wave of nostalgia should be coursing its way through your body as you yearn for a simpler time.

Of diligently saving up your pocket money, running to the local store and asking for a quarter of Sherbert Dips or whatever took your fancy. Sadly,

those days are gone.

Well actually, thanks to the internet, those days are not gone. Why, a short trip to [www.aquarterof.co.uk](http://www.aquarterof.co.uk) will set you well on the way to advanced dentist bills. They are by no means the only one.

In the course of my, um... 'research' for this article, I have come across several. [www.retrosweetsuk.net](http://www.retrosweetsuk.net), for example, has me about a gnat's knacker from loading up on Black Jacks and Fruit Salad (with a suitable 2:1 ratio in favour of the Fruit Salad of course).

You could take advantage of the fact that you've got both a disposable income and the, let's call it 'responsibility', to make your own decisions about whether or not it is a good idea to splurge it on sweets. Just browsing the imagery will be enough to get your credit-card-detail-entering juices flowing.

It's not just the virtual stuff either – I've started to notice places in the local high street or in shopping malls. Little boutiques billing themselves as Ye Olde Sweete Shoppe as if they were taking advantage of a special sign-writing offer for the letter 'e'. Their windows are stuffed full of those distinctive jars and the face of every adult customer reads somewhere between 'this is awesome' and 'I really shouldn't be in here'.

Part of it feels like a hugely exploitative cash-in. That someone, somewhere is rubbing their hands in glee at the helpless compulsion we feel for nostalgia.

But mostly, I'm just happy that 'a quarter of...' these days is now metric...

RF



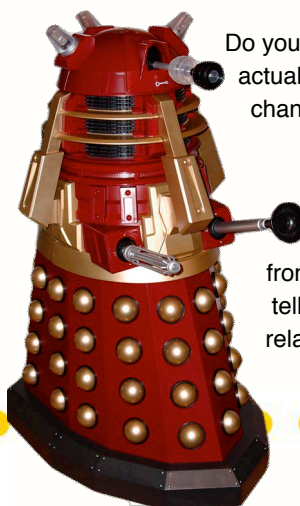


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## Welcome to the TV&Film Section



Do you remember the days when you had to actually walk to the TV in order to change the channel? Do you remember when there were only four channels to choose from? Well we do here at Retro Fusion. This is the section where we celebrate all of our favourite films and TV programs from days gone by, so sit down, tune in the telly, rewind the tape to the beginning and relax. Press PLAY to start...

## Legend of Conan 2014 release set

Despite years of speculation and rumour, the possibility of a classic Conan follow-up is looking more promising as new details of the long awaited project are starting to emerge.



Earlier this year in an online video interview, the legendary action star Arnold Schwarzenegger expressed his concerns with Universal Studios previous lack of interest in continuing their accounts of the days of high adventure.

Loyal fans of the 1982 original will be pleased to know that the sequel bypasses both the detestable Conan the Destroyer and the 2011 remake starting Jason Momoa. Obviously a lot of the speculation surrounding the film was centred on if Arnold himself would be suitable for the role. However the current premise of the film will have Conan at the same age as Schwarzenegger. Producer Frederik

Malmberg stated that the "original ended with Arnold on the throne as a seasoned warrior. He knows he'll be going to Valhalla and wants to go out with a good battle".



# TV&F





American cable channel Syfy has released new information on their remake of the dark 70's sci-fi drama. Heroes writer Joe Pokaski and Casino Royale director Martin Campbell are on board with the project which is to be produced by Georgeville TV.

A much loved original series conceived by legendary screenwriter and Dalek creator Terry Nation. Blake's 7 was a gritty tale about a group of unfortunate criminals attempting to escape the clutches of the evil Terran Federation, while also desperately inspiring others to rebel against the totalitarian regime.

Blake's 7 was described by its own creator as 'The Dirty Dozen in Space' and while it remains to be seen if the remake will adhere to the original concept. David Ellender, CEO of FremantleMedia International has already stated that "Its complex characters and gritty storylines, coupled with the highly talented team and modern production techniques are sure to appeal to both original fans of the show and new viewers."

Currently a release date has yet to be announced.

**The Retro Computer Museum  
are proud to be associated  
with Revival 2013.**

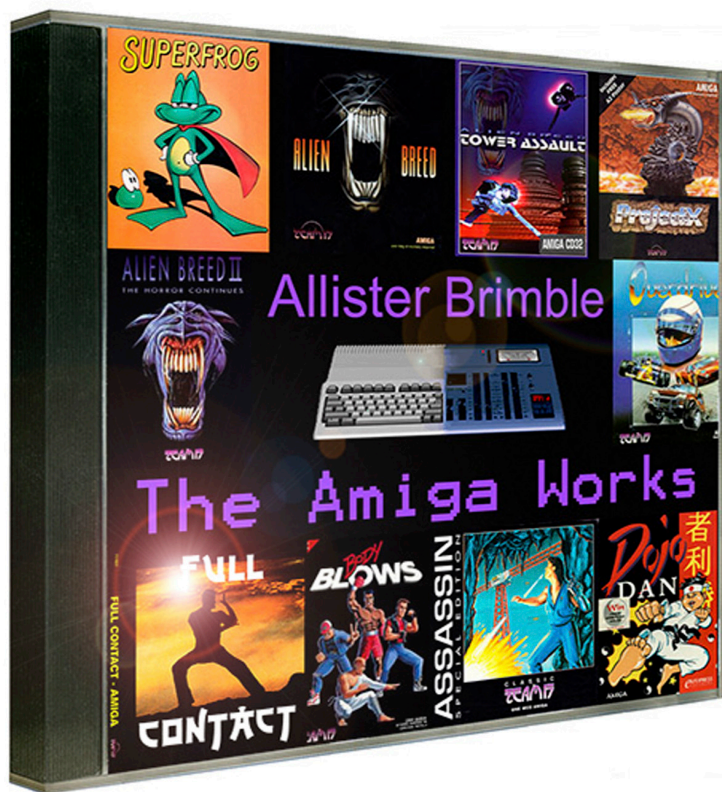
**The Retro Computer Museum is a  
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[www.retrocomputermuseum.co.uk](http://www.retrocomputermuseum.co.uk)





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I have bought a number of pieces from Pixel Pyro, including a Pacman charm bracelet and Mario 1up mushroom earring, necklace and bracelet set. The items are very well made with attention to detail to packaging, I asked Su if she minded having an interview with me for the Retro Fusion magazine, as I wanted to share with other people an alternative gift idea for any occasion.

**RetroKat:** Welcome Su. For those out there would you be able to give a brief introduction as to your connection with the retro gaming industry please.

**Su:** Hi I'm Su Bagley, married to Jim Bagley, we have two daughters, Charlotte and Izabelle, I'm a Director of Pixel Pyro Limited, and I work from home, I have my own studio, where I create colourful glass art beads in the flame. I'm a self taught lamp work glass bead artist, my job includes the whole design process of each bead, making them, photographing them, and promoting them online.

**RetroKat:** So how did the name Pixel Pyro come about?

**Su:** We tried to come up with something that would intertwine both sides of our company, Jim is Pixel, as he makes computer games, and I'm Pyro, because I'm a lampwork glass beadmaker.

**RetroKat:** Where do you get your inspiration for your jewellery?

Many things inspire my beads and jewellery, my surroundings, the place where I live, as I'm lucky enough to live on the coast, this inspires a lot of my organic sea beads, and being on the west coast, we have fantastic sunsets, which help a lot with colour inspiration, the area we live in is also semi-rural, with lots of parks and woodland, I draw inspiration from nature walks with Jim and the girls, we go collecting in the autumn, for cones, and autumn leaves, and acorns. For a lot of my sculptural work, Jims involvement in computer games also inspires me, if I see something I like, I sometimes want to re-create it in glass form, it's a challenge for me to take something that is 2D and turn it into a wearable 3D glass object, I also draw inspiration from the contrasting colours in the retro games. I also love colour, and form, and creating things.

**RetroKat:** What are your pieces made from? And how do you make them?

**Su:** they're all hand made from glass, sometimes I use fine silver leaf, fine silver wire, which reacts with the glass to produce organic effects. I use them mainly in my organic rock style beads

There are many techniques involved in producing beads, there is a lot to learn, all about heat control, and gravity, using high heat, 1000 degree plus flame, to form the glass, I also only use a select amount of tools, a blade, a poker, and a graphite marver, and glass cutting shears.

**RetroKat:** Where can people find your jewellery?

**Su:** You can buy my jewellery at [Folksy.com](https://www.folksy.com/). The prices range from: Earrings are from around £9, up to bracelets with all sterling silver findings at around £35.







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